

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 04521 200427Z

14

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 SAM-01 /082 W

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R 200330Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3754

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 4521

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, SN, CH

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE TRADE MISSION OFF TO THE PRC

REF: A) SINGAPORE 1151, 3/20/75,

B) SINGAPORE A-131, 8/29/75.

BEGIN UNCLAS

SUMMARY

A 12-MAN GOS-SPONSORED TRADE MISSION IS CURRENTLY ON A TWO-WEEK VISIT TO THE PRC. A RETURN PRC MISSION TO SINGAPORE IS EXPECTED BY GOS OFFICIALS SOON. END SUMMARY.

1. THE SUNDAY TIMES ISSUE OF OCTOBER 12 REPORTED THAT A TWELVE MEMBER SINGAPORE TRADE MISSION WAS DEPARTING THAT DAY FOR A TWO WEEK VISIT TO CHINA. THE TEAM WILL FIRST VISIT THE
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PAGE 02 SINGAP 04521 200427Z

KWANGCHOW AUTUMN TRADE FAIR IN CANTON, AND THEN IS EXPECTED

TO GO ON TO PEKING AND SHANGHAI.

2. THE TRADE MISSION IS GOING AT THE INVITATION OF THE CHINA MACHINERY IMPORT-EXPORT CORPORATION (MACHIMPEX). THE PRC HAD INDICATED DURING FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM'S VISIT TO PEKING IN MARCH THAT IT WOULD WELCOME AN EXCHANGE OF TRADE MISSIONS WITH SINGAPORE AND THEREFORE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEPARTURE OF THIS MISSION COMES AS NO SURPRISE. (SEE REFTTEL).

3. MEMBERS OF THE MISSION INCLUDE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SINGAPORE'S MANUFACTURING, TRADING, AND BANKING SECTORS. ALTHOUGH THE TEAM IS LED BY TRADE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR RIDZWAN DZAFIR, AND GOING AT THE INVITATION OF THE PRC, GOS OFFICIALS HAVE NOT CHARACTERIZED THE MISSION AS AN OFFICIAL ONE. HOWEVER, IN ADDITION TO RIDZWAN, THE TEAM INCLUDES TWO OFFICIALS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND THE SON OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GOH KENG SWEE, MR. GOH KIAN CHEE, WHO IS A PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE. MOREOVER, THE "PRIVATE SECTOR" REPRESENTATIVES ARE WITH ONE EXCEPTION ALL FROM COMPANIES WHOLLY-OWNED OR CONTROLLED BY GOS (EXCEPTION IS SINGAPORE PETROLEUM CORPORATION, IN WHICH GOS HAS A 30 PERCENT INTEREST).

END UNCLAS.

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4. STAITS TIMES ON OCTOBER 13 ALSO REPORTED RIDZWAN COMMENT THAT IS A POSSIBILITY THE PRC WILL SOON SEND A TRADE MISSION TO SINGAPORE. THAT THIS IS INDEED A STRONG POSSIBILITY WAS CONFIRMED BY DEPUTY SECRETARY OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TAN BOON SENG IN CONVERSATION WITH ECONOMIC COUNSELOR ON OCTOBER 17. TAN IMPLIED THAT THE PRC RETURN VISIT MIGHT COME ABOUT SOONER THAN THE GOS HAD ORIGINALLY ANTICIPATED, AND THAT ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE PERHAPS DEVELOPING AT A FASTER PACE THAN DESIRED BY THE GOS.
HOLDRIDGE

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